



## MEDIA ADVISORY

# “Fix my infrastructure” message heard loud and clear Candidates differ on how to fix it

*For Immediate Release: Monday, October 6, 2014 — Winnipeg, Manitoba*

Candidates for mayor in Winnipeg and Brandon have heard the message from voters - “fix my infrastructure” - and agree that it is a priority issue in this election. However they differ on how to follow through, according to a Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA) survey of nine mayoral candidates in the two cities.

The in-depth one-on-one interviews, conducted by independent researchers at Probe Research Inc., covered eight key questions about infrastructure; all candidate answers are all posted on line in both text and video at [www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure](http://www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure)

“The public should feel confident that the candidates definitely understand there is a problem and have pledged infrastructure will be a priority if they are elected,” said Chris Lorenc, President of the MHCA. Each of the nine candidates were interviewed on subjects ranging from taxes and sources of revenues needed to pay for infrastructure renewal; to improving inter-government relations to help fund infrastructure; and the value of public-private partnerships (P3s.)

“We conducted this research because we know voters in Manitoba make the connection between fixing their streets and the economic health of the province. The fact is, dollars spent fixing a road, upgrading a sewer line or building flood protection creates jobs for engineers, planners, contractors, and truck drivers who in turn buy groceries, invest in homes and pay taxes. It’s those tax dollars, paid by employers and the workers they hire, that help pay for hospitals, schools, universities, and recreation facilities – all essential amenities that enhance our social well-being and quality of life,” said Lorenc. “Investment in infrastructure is our economic health care plan.”

To drive that message home even stronger MHCA also asked candidates to support the industry’s four-point strategy that charts out how sustained and strategic investment in infrastructure can support economic growth in Manitoba.

The level of commitment to the four point MHCA Municipal Infrastructure Investment strategy varied; some candidates endorsed the MHCA’s strategy, others offered a variation on the MHCA strategy. The specific results from candidates, in response to the questions, can also be found on-line at [www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure](http://www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure)

“We would encourage the public to learn more about what each candidate said and vote for the candidate that closely matches their vision for how sustainable infrastructure should be managed. Our job has been to help inform the public because we know an informed public will make the right choice.”

The media and members of the public can also see the entire results of the survey in print and in video at [www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure](http://www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure).

### **Facts on the in-depth interviews on infrastructure**

#### **Candidates Interviewed:**

##### **Winnipeg:**

Brian Bowman, Michel Fillion, Paula Havixbeck, Robert-Falcon Ouellette, David Sanders, Gord Steeves, Judy Wasylcia-Leis

##### **Brandon:**

Rich Chrest and Shari Decter-Hirst

**The MHCA four point strategy:**

1. MHCA's core principles are that infrastructure projects should:
  - 1) Be permanent programs;
  - 2) Focus on economic growth;
  - 3) Embrace innovation;
  - 4) Harness partnerships with the private sector;
  - 5) Have transparently dedicate revenue streams and
  - 6) Include periodic public review for adjustment.
  
2. Municipal leaders should implement the Infrastructure Funding Council (IFC) Report 2011 recommendations in those areas within municipal government competence.
  
3. Leaders should build upon the Regional and Residential Streets Reserve dedicated accounts strategy adopted by Winnipeg City Council over the last two budget years; and
  
4. That given municipal governments lack of fiscal capacity to address the infrastructure deficit within the existing frameworks, municipal leaders should ask the Premier of Manitoba to strike the task force recommended by the IFC to review the fiscal sharing arrangements between municipalities and the Province of Manitoba.

**See how each candidate responded to the MHCA strategy specifically and how they answered all other questions on infrastructure at:**

<http://www.mhca.mb.ca/fix-my-infrastructure>

**A Probe Research survey from Spring 2014 says:**

- 56 per cent of Manitobans say local governments should spend more money on streets, roads, bridges, and water and wastewater projects.
- 89 per cent of Manitobans say that investment in infrastructure creates a healthy economy.
- 87 per cent of Manitobans are not satisfied with the condition of their roads and streets.
- 76 per cent say the cost of repairing and improving core municipal infrastructure should be shared fairly between the three levels of government based on their access to taxation revenues.

**The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association** is the recognized voice of the heavy construction industry in Manitoba, promoting sustainable investment in core infrastructure to support economic growth benefiting our province, and country in a manner consistent with the broad public interest. With pride, the Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has been an active member of Manitoba, and Canada's, business and construction community for over 70 years.

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For further information, see the above Fact Sheet or contact:

**Best regards,**

**Sarah Piercy**

Manager of Marketing and Communications & Editor-in-Chief, [Groundbreaker](#) Magazine  
Manitoba Heavy Construction Association (MHCA)  
p. 204.947.1379 ext. 16 | f. 204.943.2279  
Unit #3 - 1680 Ellice Ave. | Winnipeg, MB | R3H 0Z2  
[sarah.piercy@mhca.mb.ca](mailto:sarah.piercy@mhca.mb.ca) | [www.mhca.mb.ca](http://www.mhca.mb.ca)

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